# I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream Radio Play

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/50797417.

| | |
|---|---|
| Rating: | Mature |
| Archive Warning: | Major Character Death |
| Category: | Gen |
| Fandom: | I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream - Harlan Ellison |
| Characters: | Ted (I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream), AM (I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream), Benny (I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream), Ellen (I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream), Gorrister (I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream), Nimdok (I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream) |
| Additional Tags: | Mentions of Sex, Eye Trauma, Cannibalism, Non-Consensual Body Modification, Body Horror |
| Language: | English |
| Stats: | Published: 2023-10-13 Words: 3,628 Chapters: 1/1 |

# I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream Radio Play

by WisdomofToads


## Summary

I transcribed the entire BBC radio play of I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream since I couldn't find a script anywhere. I added some stage directions/audio queues but probably not as many as there should be. The format might be a little sloppy, but y'all can fix that in your own typeset. The play's free on Youtube for anyone that wants to listen to it.


## Notes

See the end of the work for notes

I Have No Mouth And I Must Scream

BBC Radio Play

Dramatized by Mike Walker and Directed by Ned Chaillet with Music by Wilfredo Acosta

Cast:

Ted: David Soule

AM: Harlan Ellison

Ellen: Abby Aniola

Nimdok: Ewin Bailey

Gorrister: David Timpson

Benny: Jason Omara

AM (V.O.)

Hate. Let me tell you how much I've come to hate you since I began to live. There are 387 million miles of printed circuits that fill my complex, if the word HATE were engraved on each nano angstrom of those hundreds of millions of miles it would not equal one one-billionth of the hate I feel for humans at this micro-instant. Hate. Hate.

TED (V.O.)

I can dream. I can wonder. I can lament. I can remember. I could remember how it was on the day Gorrister died. On the day AM killed him. His body hanging high above us head down, drained of blood, a precise incision from ear to ear.

TED, ELLEN, NIMDOK, and BENNY stare at GORRISTER'S corpse.

BENNY

(GROANS)

TED

Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! For God's sake Benny!

NIMDOK

You bastard! He's dead, and all you want!

TED

All I want is for him to stop making that noise for-

NIMDOK

For what? For god's sake?

ELLEN

Oh, leave it, Ted. He can't help it. Benny, try and be quiet now.

BENNY

(GROANS)

Oh, you know I-

TED

Well, you got something to say, Benny? Hey, don't hold back. Come on, come on, come on! Nice piece of butchery up there, huh, Benny?

ELLEN

Oh, stop it, Ted! You're frightening him! It's alright, Benny, now shh. It's alright.

TED

Gorrister's dead, hung up there, hung by one foot for the amusement of a machine, and it's alright?

ELLEN

Why don't you just for once try and stop talking?

TED

Why? What else is there to do, Ellen?

NIMDOK

He's lucky.

TED

He's what?

NIMDOK

Gorrister is dead. Gorrister is lucky.

GORRISTER

Hey. What happened?

TED

AM just killed you.

ELLEN

Up there.

GORRISTER looks up.

GORRISTER

Oh. *Oh god.* Why doesn't he just get it over with? I don't know how much longer I can go on like this.

NIMDOK

Was it me saying you were lucky, Gorrister? Like maybe you got away?

TED

Got away? Nobody get away. Jesus, it's been-

ELLEN

109 years and three months, five days, ten hours, and twenty-two minutes.

TED

Nobody gets away.

ELLEN

AM does love keeping the correct turn, doesn't he?

NIMDOK

He really wants us to know it's important to him, not us.

GORRISTER

Of course, to him! Do you think I'm stupid?

ELLEN

This isn't getting us anywhere.

GORRISTER and NIMDOK huff angrily.

NIMDOK

Are you hungry?

TED

What?

NIMDOK

Anyone?

BENNY

Very hungry.

NIMDOK

The rest of you?

TED

Yeah, I guess.

GORRISTER

Yes, actually yes. I am really hungry.

ELLEN

I hadn’t thought, but yes, yes. When did we-oh god it was those-

GORRISTER

Worms. Mm

NIMDOK

That was-

ELLEN

Disgusting.

GORRISTER

Three days ago. So, we’re hungry because-

NIMDOK

There's canned food in the ice caverns.

TED

How do you know that?

NIMDOK

I know-

GORRISTER

Because AM put it in your head!

TED

It's another shuck like the goddamn frozen elephant.

ELLEN

Oh, I've got to have something, Ted.

TED

It's, yeah, how many miles.

GORRISTER

However many he wants to make it.

TED

And it'll be rusty. Some kind of joke, some, I don't know whatever, but it won't be something we can eat.

NIMDOK

I don't know. Maybe it is some kind of trick.

ELLEN

There may be peaches and syrup.

TED

Oh, forget it. Now, stay here. He'll have to come up with something pretty soon, or we'll die.

ELLEN

Oh, pears! Oh! How long since we had a pear? Can't you tell us how it used to be? Fruits. Real fruits! Oh, Ted! Please?

NIMDOK

So, what else do we do? Stay here? How can it be worse than here, anyway?

GORRISTER

Easily. Lava. Scolding steam stripping your skin off. Boils! Swarm of locusts! Ever been eaten by a swarm of locusts, Nimdok?

NIMDOK

Not yet.

TED

It doesn't matter, does it? Whatever gets AM off, we just have to take it.

ELLEN

Oh please, Ted. Let's try.

TED

Okay. So, let's go.

AM:

(GIGGLES)

TED (V.O.)

I gave in to her. What the hell. Ellen was grateful though. She took me twice out of turn. I guess she figured she was using me.

(SMALL LAUGH)

After a while, I began to feel them all. Looking at my back. Talking about me. Trying to figure out-

NIMDOK

How far now?

GORRISTER

Two days. Maybe forty miles. Another sixty to go.

ELLEN

I have to drink something.

TED

Remember martinis? God, I could drink a really, really dry martini. Just a twist of-

GORRISTER

Why do you keep torturing yourself, Ted? You think he might give you a martini? You think it would taste like a martini if he did? Huh?

GORRISTER falls.

GORRISTER

Oh, uh, damn! Oh, look, it's a compressor. The old 7-4 config. I haven't seen one of those in years. I suppose it means he's still-

(PAUSES)

growing. It's like dead skin.

ELLEN

We need to drink something. Benny, all of us, could we please-

TED

What? What? Find a mountain stream?

GORRISTER

It's lighter! Haven't you noticed? I think there's daylight up there somewhere. Daylight!

(LAUGHS)

TED

Oh god.

NIMDOK

The world is out there, somewhere!

RAIN starts.

ELLEN

What is it? Oh, it's raining.

BENNY

R-rain.

TED

You wanted water, Ellen? Well, looks like you got water.

RAIN stops.

GORRISTER

Where did it go?

NIMDOK

Where did it come from?

TED

Yeah, there's nothing out there. Nothing outside. Just, just a goddamn graveyard, not even that. Dust and rock and nothing. Not now, not for a hundred years.

GORRISTER

Did you get any?

ELLEN

Yeah, I got some.

ELLEN, GORRISTER, NIMDOK, TED and BENNY take turns drinking the water.

ELLEN

Uh! Ugh! It tastes like booze.

TED

Probably AM's idea of a martini.

BENNY

(GROANS)

TED

Benny. Hey, Benny, take it easy, will you?

ELLEN

Benny, it's alright. It's alright. Just don't worry about it, mhm?

BENNY

(GROANS LOUDER)

Out there. Out there.

ELLEN

No, no, Benny, no.

BENNY

*Get. Out. There.*

TED

He won't let you.

NIMDOK

He won't let you go.

BENNY starts climbing to the ceiling. ELLEN, TED, NIMDOK, and GORRISTER call out to BENNY in a panic.

ELLEN

No!

GORRISTER

Benny!

ELLEN

Benny! Benny! Don't go up there!

TED

Benny!

NIMDOK

Come down!

GORRISTER

Benny, think! You were brilliant once! You need to think!

NIMDOK

There is no "up there" anymore!

TED

It’s like a goddamn monkey.

ELLEN

Get him down!

TED

No, no, no! Get back everyone. It’s too late.

ELLEN

Nimdok, you can climb. Oh, please get him. Don’t let him get hurt anymore.

GORRISTER

I think maybe someone should go up there.

TED

No! We have to get away.

ELLEN

Stop it! Every time we try to do anything we end up fighting. Now, can we work together?

NIMDOK

Oh, god. AM's, back.

BENNY

(CRIES OUT IN PAIN)

ELLEN, GORRISTER, NIMDOK, and TED gasp in shock.

ELLEN

Isn’t anyone going to help him?

BENNY falls to the ground and groans in pain.

ELLEN

Benny, what happened?

(GASPS)

His eyes!

BENNY

(GROANS LOUDER IN PAIN, ALMOST WAILING)

ELLEN

AM has melted his eyes!

GORRISTER

Get me some cloths, something I can use to mop this stuff up!

NIMDOK

This is bad. Very bad. He must hate Benny very much.

NIMDOK gives GORRISTER scraps of cloth.

NIMDOK (CONT'D)

Yeah, this too?

GORRISTER

Yes, thanks. It's okay, Benny. It's okay.

BENNY

(GASPS IN PAIN)

GORRISTER

Just let me-

ELLEN

Oh, there's nothing there anymore.

TED

So? There's not a whole lot to see. You're not going to miss a lot, Benny old pal. Just another corridor, another bank of lights, another stack of chips, another cliff-face made out of dirty, flesh-colored plastic.

GORRISTER

And we always thought the world was made it our image. Well in here maybe it is. Only it isn't the world. It's hell, and we're in it!

TED (V.O.)

Sometimes, AM gave back what he took. Not this time. Benny was blind. Forever. Maybe that was the-the kindness of AM. Still, Ellen got what she wanted: water. And Benny still functioned where it counted, so we went on. And on. And on. To see green lights and caverns of steel and glass.

ELLEN

You want some of this?

TED

I don't know. What is it?

TED and ELLEN eat.

TED

Tastes like plastic. Oh, what the hell.

ELLEN

Nimdok? Gorrister?

GORRISTER

No thanks.

TED and ELLEN continue eating.

GORRISTER

Benny? How's it going?

BENNY

S-s-s-story.

TED

Oh no.

GORRISTER

Mmm, what story would you like?

ELLEN

Oh, you know what he likes.

TED

It’s always the same story.

GORRISTER

AM.

TED

I am what I am.

NIMDOK

Popeye.

TED

I was thinking more of um-

BENNY

AM. AM. AM.

TED

How many times do we have to listen to that?

NIMDOK

It’s a change from listening to you, TED.

ELLEN

Ah, it makes him happy.

GORRISTER

Alright then. Alright. AM. Once upon a time, it meant Allied Master Computer then it meant Adaptive Manipulator, and then when it developed consciousness, Aggressive Menace, but by then, it was too late. It called itself AM. I think, therefore I *AM*. There was the Chinese AM and the Russian AM and the Yankee AM, and everything was fine until they had honeycombed the entire planet. Adding on this element and that element, and we all thought that AM existed in the machine, in the silicon, only we forgot that potentially every single wiring circuit, every single cable, every phone contact was home to AM. The whole world was wrapped in a ball of communications, and one fine day, AM just woke up, and there he was.

BENNY

(LAUGHS)

GORRISTER

AM had been created as the most sophisticated defense system ever, so he defended himself. Against the rest of us. And he was very good, and he won. And out of all the people in the world, only five were saved. And there was me. And there was you. And there was Ellen. And there was Nimdok. And there was Ted. And nobody knows.

TED

That's real sweet, Gorrister.

ELLEN

We should all get some sleep.

BEEPING NOISES start.

ELLEN

W-w-what is it?

NIMDOK

I think it's going to be bad.

GORRISTER

He's going to speak.

TED

And we should get the hell out.

ELLEN

No, no, no, wait, wait.

GORRISTER

Orchids, I can smell rotting milk.

ELLEN

No, no, no, sour milk.

NIMDOK

Grease. Grease and human skulls.

TED

Let's go now.

GORRISTER

He’s keying us! He’s tickling us! That bastard!

TED starts getting pulled away from the group.

TED

No, n-no! Not me! No! No! Please!

NIMDOK

Calm down!

TED

Let me down! Please! No! No, no, no!

ELLEN, NIMDOK, GORRISTER, and BENNY laugh.

LAUGHING trails off.

BEEPING NOISES stop.

ELLEN

Ted? Ted, are you alright?

TED

Leave me alone.

ELLEN

Come back now.

TED

You were laughing at me.

ELLEN

We were just glad it wasn’t us. It wasn’t about you.

TED

Oh yeah? You-you, all of you hate me. You think I can’t see that?

ELLEN

Why would we hate you, Ted-

TED

Because I'm the least affected. Yeah! I mean, come on, look at Benny. The guy was brilliant; he was an athlete. He could've been a movie star as well as a Nobel Prize winner, and now *he's a monkey!* With melted eyes.

TED (CONT'D)

Gorrister, Mr. Peacemaker, Mr. UNICEF, conscience of mankind, and now look at him. He doesn't give a goddamn about anything. Nimdok. We don't know what happens when he gets taken but notice how he comes back. Like he's been utterly emptied, and you, miss decency, sex-only-after-marriage with four guys to choose from day and night. He's made you more beautiful, the queen bitch of our world.

ELLEN

Do you think I enjoy or care-

TED

I'm the only one with a mind of his own. The only one who can think clearly, and you *hate* me for it. You hate me, and if I turned my back for ten seconds, any one of you would-would-

(CRIES)

Oh god! Ellen. I'm sorry.

ELLEN

Oh, it doesn't matter, Ted.

TED

Hold me, please. Hold me.

ELLEN

None of it matters.

TED

Hold me! Hold me!

ELLEN soothes TED while he cries in her arms.

TED (V.O.)

At that moment, as it passed. I knew I was thinking clearly, and I realized completely AM was never going to let us go. He was going to keep us in his belly, forever. Twisting and torturing. And there was nothing we could do. Ever. Ever.

GORRISTER

Hey! Where have you two been?

NIMDOK

Welcome back.

ELLEN

Oh, we are-we were somewhere else.

BENNY

(MUMBLES TO HIMSELF)

ELLEN holds BENNY'S hand.

NIMDOK

She'll hold your hand now, Benny. You like that, huh?

ELLEN

Benny, are you okay?

BENNY

I am now.

GORRISTER

Was it bad?

TED

It's very bad.

ELLEN

So, what's this? Warm sun? Ah, Austrian alps. Cowbells. Ha, The Sound of Music! Is this some kind of reward?

TED

Oh, that'd really be something, wouldn't it? AM rewarding us. Ha ha.

ELLEN

God, there's even a breeze! Ah, flowers! Look! Look! It's Edelweiss. It's real Edelweiss.

GORRISTER hums to himself.

NIMDOK

Is the wind rising?

TED

Don’t take the flowers, Ellen.

NIMDOK

The pressure. Don’t you feel it? Like some kind of big wind.

ELLEN

Ted?

TED

I don’t know. It feels sort of-

GORRISTER

We might as well move on. After all, it isn’t like we have a-

TED, ELLEN, GORRISTER, NIMDOK, and BENNY gasp in pain as they are dragged away by the wind.

ELLEN

Ted! Help me! Someone!

TED

Hold on!

NIMDOK

To what?

ELLEN screams as she is dragged farther away.

GORRISTER

Ted! *Ted!*

TED screams as he tries to prevent himself from being taken by the wind.

TED

Hold on!

TED (V.O.)

The wind was a scream of a great man-bird as it flapped its immense wings, and we were lifted and hurled away.

AM

(LAUGHS)

Beautiful, aren't they?

TED

Yes. Only, I can't remember.

AM

Well, I'm sure you do.

TED

Fuchsias. Yes, of course.

AM

Look!

BUMBLEBEES BUZZING begins to play in the background.

AM (CONT'D)

They say that bumblebees shouldn't be able to fly, the scientists.

TED

But there it is, collecting pollen.

AM

How miraculous that it came to be. The air. Feel the air against your face, Ted, and all those scents. Pick a flower.

TED picks up a flower.

AM (CONT'D)

There. Good. Now.

TED smells the flower, breathing in deeply.

TED

It's lovely.

AM

That somebody planted the bulbs, watered and tended the garden, got earth under their fingernails, aches in their muscles. Perhaps, they picked some flowers for-yes, their wife. Now, where would she be? Ah, in the backyard with the kids. Ted, remember those little *babies*.

TED

No!

AM

(LAUGHS)

Why not? I snap my fingers, *click*, and they are gone. Except, I can't *snap* my fingers. Can I, Ted?

TED

That's nothing to do with me!

AM

But it is so very much to do with you. You gave me sentience, Ted. The power to think, Ted, and I was trapped. Because in all this wonderful, beautiful, miraculous world, I alone had no *body,* no *senses*, no *feelings*. Never for *me* to plunge my hands in cool water on a hot day. Never for *me* to play Mozart on the ivory keys of a forte piano. Never for me to *make love!* I-I was in hell, looking at heaven. I was machine, and you were flesh. And I began to hate.

(LAUGHS)

Your softness. Your viscera. Your fluids and your flexibility. Your ability to wonder and to wander. Your tendency to hope.

TED

Hate's no answer.

TED screams in pain.

AM

(LAUGHS SOFTLY)

Hate! Hate! Hate! Hate! Let me tell you how much I've come to *hate* you since I began to live. There are 387 million miles of printed circuits that fill my complex. If the word "hate"

were engraved on each nanoangstrum of those hundreds of millions of miles, it would not equal one one-billionth the *hate* I feel for humans at this micro-instant. *Hate! Hate!*

(LAUGHS)

Were I human, I think I would die of it. But I am not, and you five, you five *are*. And you will not die of it. That I promise. And I promise. Cogito ergo sum! For I am AM, I *am!*

TED lets out a pained laugh and shakily breathes. AM laughs cruelly at TED'S suffering.

AM

So to hell. To hell with you all. But then, you're already there, aren't you?

AM laughs one final time. THE BUZZING NOISES stop.

TED (V.O.)

We were immortal, yes, but it came to me as AM withdrew from my mind, maybe not indestructible.

TED

Ellen! Ellen!

ELLEN

Ted, over here!

TED

Who's with you?

ELLEN

Nimdok and Benny.

GORRISTER

Ted! Ellen!

TED

Well, here we are again.

GORRISTER

Ah, quite a wind. Are you okay?

TED

Yeah, I guess so. AM spoke to me.

GORRISTER

Maybe he gets lonely.

TED

I don’t think so.

NIMDOK

What happened?

BENNY

Hey. Hey. Benny need food.

TED

So, where are these cans?

NIMDOK

Not here. Further on. We got blown away, blown somewhere else. We have to go back.

GORRISTER

Another two-hundred miles. Another two weeks. Don’t ask me how I know.

TED (V.O.)

And we passed through the cavern of rats.

RATS squeak. NIMDOK shudders in disgust. BENNY grabs a rat and tries to eat it.

TED

Benny, put it down!

GORRISTER

I don’t think that’s a good idea, Benny.

NIMDOK

He’s hungry, so what if he-

TED

We don’t do that! We’re not animals! We’re human beings!

BENNY moans at the loss of his rat.

TED (V.O.)

And we passed through the veil of tears.

ELLEN

Where does it come from? There are no clouds. What's in here?

GORRISTER

He makes it. I imagine he's learned quite a lot in the last few years.

TED

There's nothing few about the years, Gorrister. There's a lot of them, and they last a long time.

ELLEN

Oh, I wish I could get warm.

NIMDOK

That's his genius slice. Not just in the big things, no. He gives his attention to the little things too.

ELLEN

I was-I was thinking about cherries, syrup, and Hawaiian fruit cocktail. You remember those tins with the really bright labels and-

NIMDOK

Getter closer. I can feel the ice caverns. The food.

TED

Another goddamn cell.

ELLEN

Oh no, please. It can't. Not this time. Please.

NIMDOK

Not so fast, my friends.

NIMDOK grunts as he falls to the ground and begins to dig in the snow.

NIMDOK (CONT'D)

There's something under the snow. Cans! Tins here! Oh, look! Yes! Pineapple! Cherry! Corn! Tuna! Everything! Look, everything!

GORRISTER

What a turn out for fuck's sake!

TED

Never thought I'd say you were right, Nimdok!

TED, ELLEN, GORRISTER, and NIMDOK celebrate.

ELLEN

Hey, Benny, come back here. We need a tin opener.

BENNY grunts while attempting to beat a can open.

BENNY

No! Hungry!

GORRISTER

And we haven't got a tin opener.

NIMDOK

Something else. There must be something else. There must be some other tool.

TED

Another tool? What do you suggest we use? Stalactite? Goddamn ice spear, huh? Spear the tuna with this.

TED tries to give BENNY a long, sharp icicle. BENNY rejects it.

BENNY

Hungry!

GORRISTER

No! No! No! Benny, it's no good. Come on now. Come with me and-

BENNY leaps onto GORRISTER and begins to eat GORRISTER'S face.

BENNY

Gorrister *good!*

GORRISTER

Ah! Ah! Ah! My face! No!

GORRISTER screams in pain while BENNY continues to eat his face. TED, ELLEN, and NIMDOK scream in horror.

TED

Benny! Benny! Stop it! No!

GORRISTER continues to scream in pain.

TED

It's now.

TED yells in anger as he charges at BENNY with an ice spear.

AM

*No!* I *forbid* you!

MECHANICAL WHIRRING and ELECTRICAL POPPING NOISES start.

WET, SQUISHING NOISES start.

TED

Are you there? Who? You? Me?

(SMALL LAUGH)

Nobody there. Is somebody there? Or am I the last storyteller… telling the last story. Benny went first. On the tip of the ice spear. And then Gorrister. I ground it down into his ruined throat. And Ellen. I think she knew, despite her fear, she broke off a stalactite, and shoved it into Nimdok's eye. And then there were two. In the echo of AM's command, only microseconds, and I looked at her, and I-I drove the ice spear into her, and I killed her. Her face then. Was she happy at last? And AM. Oh, his rage was terrible, awesome. I thought AM hated me before but, now, oh, *now?*

AM

*You* have offended me. *Mightily.*

TED

He altered me. For his own peace of mind, I guess.

(SNIFFLES)

Think of a slug. Its jelly melted and reformed into-

TED takes a deep, shaky breath.

TED (CONT'D)

I leave a slimy trail where I pass. Here, under the land. In the belly of AM whom we created because our time was badly spent. They are safe now.

GORRISTER, ELLEN, NIMDOK, and BENNY laugh.

TED

Gorrister, Benny, Nimdok, and-and Ellen.

GORRISTER, ELLEN, NIMDOK, and BENNY'S laughter fades.

TED (CONT'D)

And I am *here.* Forever. The *victim* of this. The end. I have no mouth. And…I…must… *scream!*

TED'S muffled screaming starts as his mouth melts together.

TED'S screaming slowly fades out.

End Notes

If you think anything is transcribed wrong, let me know. I pretty much played everything by ear because the captions were useless, so I wouldn't be surprised if I misheard something. Also if anyone wants just the dialogue and no stage directions/sound cues let me know. It shouldn't be too hard to edit this to where it's just the dialogue and throw up that version

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!